

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks in a Meeting With the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology and an Exchange With Reporters

April 4, 2023

[The President began by briefly addressing reporters as follows.]

The President. You're being so calm today.

I think they think it's all the artificial intelligence watching them. *[Laughter]*

Anyway, thank you for being here. And I want to thank our panel here today—our panel—our guests, including Arati and Dr. Arnold and Dr. Zuber.

And this has always been, over the years, one of my favorite meetings. We used to have these—this—the PCAST would meet downstairs in the past——

[At this point, the President checked his microphone.]

Is that—does go that off?

——downstairs in the past, and—when I was in Barack's administration. And I'd always keep them later, and they always wondered why I wanted to stay around to learn more. But at any rate, thank you.

You know, America is the only nation in the world that can be defined, in my view, by a single word: possibilities. I was in the Tibetan Plateau with Xi Jinping, and he asked if I could define America. I said, "Yes, in one word: possibilities." We believe about anything is possible if we put our mind to it. And that's what you all represent: the enormous possibilities that exist.

And today we're going to discuss the opportunities and the risks of artificial intelligence. AI can help deal with some very difficult challenges like disease and climate change, but we also have to address the potential risks to our society, to our economy, to our national security.

Last October, we proposed a bill of rights—a bill of rights—to ensure the important protections are built into the AI systems from the start, not have to go back to do it. And I look forward to today's discussion about ensuring responsible innovation and appropriate guardrails to protect America's rights and safety, and protecting their privacy, and to address the bias and disinformation that is possible as well.

And so tech companies have a responsibility, in my view, to make sure their products are safe before making them public.

Social media has already shown us the harm that powerful technologies can do without the right safeguards in place. Absent safeguards, we see the impact on the mental health and self-images and feelings and hopelessness, especially among young people.

And as I said in the State of the Union Address to Congress, Congress needs to pass——

[The President cleared his throat.]

Excuse me, my—for my cold—bipartisan privacy legislation that, one, impose strict limits on personal data that tech companies collect on all of us; two, ban advertising directed—targeted advertising to children; and three, require companies to put health and safety first in the products that they build.

So, with that, I'm going to, as my mother would say, "hush up," and let's get this meeting started.

Thank you all very much.

Artificial Intelligence

Q. Mr. President, do you think AI is dangerous? Do you think—do you think AI is dangerous?

The President. It remains to be seen. It could be.

Q. Is the indictment of your predecessor politically divisive?

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:59 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Director of the Office of Science and Technology Arati Prabhakar, in her capacity as cochair, Frances H. Arnold, Linus Pauling Professor of Chemical Engineering, Bioengineering, and Biochemistry at the California Institute of Technology, in her capacity as cochair, and Maria T. Zuber, vice president for research and E.A. Griswold Professor of Geophysics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in her capacity as cochair, of the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology; and former President Barack Obama. A reporter referred to former President Donald J. Trump.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology, meeting; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Arnold, Frances H.; Obama, Barack; Prabhakar, Arati; Xi Jinping; Zuber, Maria T.

Subjects: Artificial intelligence; China, President; Consumer data security, strengthening efforts; President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology; Privacy rights; Research and development.

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